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ABSTRACT

The United Parents Association (UPS) developed Self Help Clinics (SHC) in schools in low income areas in New York City. These Clinics consisted of groups of parents meeting regularly to discuss problems centering around their children and the schools. In the course of these discussions, questions of parent-child relationships were frequently raised. The objective was to intervene in the SHCs in a manner that would modify the authoritarian relationship between parent and child, in order to promote more self-reliance, self-motivation and self-control in the children. The Psychological Service Center was asked by the UPA to design and carry out the intervention. Fifty-four parents from seven schools were trained as leaders for the SHCs. Three of these schools were assigned to the control group, the other four to the experimental group. The experimental procedure included a T-Group for SHC leaders at which problems in parent-child relationships were dealt with. All leaders received training in recruitment of parents for the SHCs and in conducting the SHCs. The SHCs met weekly, and were attended by 961 parents, averaging about 14 per session. There were two T-Groups for the experimental group, a pair of schools participating in each. One group met for 54 sessions, the other for 36. Differences between experimental and control groups were assessed through pre and post-project interviews. [Reproduced from best available copy.] (Author/JM)

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MODIFYING PARENT-CHILD BEHAVIOR IN A LOW INCOME GROUP

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and

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History of the Project

This project originated in the form of a request to the Psychological Service Center (PSC). The United Parents Association (UPA), a federation of Parent and Parent-Teacher Associations in New York City, began organizing Self-Help Clinics (SHC) in several low income areas in the city. These Clinics were group meetings of parents who were seeking ways to promote the education of their children. At these meetings the parents became familiar with the subject matter their children were learning at school, discussed what could be done in the home to support their children's education, learned how to assist with homework, how to utilize the special services schools have to offer, how to visit with the teacher or administrative staff, and how to plan for the future education of their children. Leaders emerged from among the parents participating in this project. The United Parents Association trained these leaders to conduct the Self-Help Clinics. These meetings were held in the schools and were restricted to parents whose children attended that school. Others, including school administrators and teachers, attended only by invitation of the parents participating in the Clinic.

During the course of these meetings, questions about discipline and parent-child relationships were raised frequently. The UPA Staff that was training the leaders felt that it was beyong their competence to deal with these questions and turned to the PSC for assistance. They described the problem in these terms: The parents' objective is to develop self-motivation, self-direction, self-discipline in their children: However, their approach to the children is characterized by direct authoritarian control, frequently including physical punishment, which defeats their objective since it results in the children being more responsive to outer control and direction. The Center was asked to develop a program that would help the parents realize their objective of promoting self-discipline and self-direction in the children and which, presumably, would enable the children to make better use of their existing educational opportunities. As the pre-project consultation proceeded the PSC proposed to add two additional training opportunities to the general SHC leadership training course which the UPA provided:

1) a continuingT-Group experience centering about school and discipline problems; and 2) experience as mental health aides in Patterson House, a residential treatment center for deprived, delinquent and disturbed boys.

The reasons for the choice of these two program supplements is documented in the project proposal and are reviewed here. There is a consistent theme in previous studies of the relationship between social class and child rearing practices. According to these studies, middle class parents focus on the child's motives and seek to develop inner controls in the child, while the lower or working-class parents are more concerned with the overt behavior and seek to control it by external restraints. In his review of the studies conducted in this country during the period before 1958 dealing with the effects of social class upon parent-child relationships, Bronfenbrenner states that "over the entire twenty-five year period studied, parent-child relationships

in the middle-class are oriented toward maintaining order and obedience."[1]

Kohn states that the "essence of the difference (between the parent-child relationships of the working-class and middle-class parents) is that working-class parents want the child to conform to externally imposed standards, while middle-class parents are far more attentive to his internal dynamics. Working class parental values center on conformity to external proscriptions, middle-class parental values on self-direction. To working-class parents, it is the overt act that matters: the child should not transgress externally imposed rules; to the middle-class parents, it is the child's motives and feelings that matter: the child should govern himself."[2]

Bayley and Schaefer report that "A study of the relation of socio-economic factors to observed maternal behavior in the Berkeley Growth Study tends to confirm findings from other srudies based on interviews about child rearing practices. For the total group there was a slight tendency for the mothers of higher socioeconomic status to be more warm, understanding, and accepting, and for those of lower status to be more controlling, irritable and punitive."[3]

In her comprehensive review, the AMERICAN LOWER CLASS FAMILY, Keller observes that lower class parents "seem to favor negative discipline enjoining improper conduct by means of threats and punishment, and by using physical rather than psychological techniques. Parents tend to emphasize custodial care, and their techniques instill concerns about offending others rather than about violating inner principles of one's own."[4]

There is an increasing recognition on the part of lower class families that these patterns of parent-child relationships interfere with the

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1. Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Socialization and Social Class through Time and Space," in Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1958, p. 425

2. Melvin L. Kohn, "Social Class and Parent-Child Relationships: An Interpretation," in Frank Biessman, Jerome Cohen and Arthur Pearl (eds.), Mental Health of the Poor. The MacMillan Company. New York, 1964. P. 163

3. Nancy Bayley and Earl S. Schaefer, "Relationships between Socio-economic Variables and the Behavior of Mothers Toward Young Children," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1960. Vol. 96, P. 76

4. Suzanne Keller, The American Lower Class Family. New York State Division for Youth, Albany, 1966. P. 46.

achievement of their child rearing objectives. As Christmas states "many working-class Negroes express middle-class values, particularly in reference to child-rearing practices and life goals, but they feel incapable of achieving these goals or of integrating these values and practices with the values of the ghetto."[1]

The T-group and Patterson House experiences were designed to develop an ability to relate to children in a manner designed to promote responsiveness to internal rather than external controls. By openly expressing one's feelings and then testing out fresh alternatives in front of a group of peers it was hoped that the T-group parents would become more sensitive to their own needs and to the needs of their children, to develop freer and more constructive relations within the family, and to become more effective in community activities. By observing, participating in and discussing methods or working with seriously disturbed and acting-out children, the parents assigned to Patterson House would become familiar with more effective ways of dealing with their own children. All of this was designed to promote child-rearing practices that would develop inner direction and control in the children.

Furthermore, we were to be examining not only procedures for utilizing the skills of professionals in influencing interpersonal relationships which affect mental health, but also a system for [illegible] these skills through nonprofessionals. The shortage of professional manpower in [illegible] health area is well documented.[2] If such procedures are effective, they would have cogent implications for the utilization of manpower in this area.

The project was designed to permit the evaluation of the effects of each of these experiences on the parent-leaders, the parents whom they lead, and the children of both leaders and parents.

It was decided to undertake these activities in only one area of the city and evaluate their effectiveness. The UPA staff discussed this program with the parent groups in the area selected and obtained an enthusiastic response. Simultaneously, we prepared a project proposal and applied to NIMH for funds to conduct the project.

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1. June Jackson Christmas, "Group Methods in Training and Practice: Nonprofessional Mental Health Personnel in a Deprived Community", American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, April 1966, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 410-419.
   See also, Hylan Lewis, "Poverty and Beha[illegible]f Low-Income Families", paper delivered at American Orthopsychiatr[illegible]ciation, Chicago, March 1964.

2. George W. Albee, Mental Health Manpower Trends: Basic Books, New York, 1969.

The proposal went through the usual review procedures and, months later, we were informed that it had been disapproved. However, the review committee considered the project to have merit and offered to consult with us about changes they would recommend to improve its chances for approval. A site visit was conducted after which we made the recommended changes and resubmitted the proposal. This time it was approved and sometime thereafter funds were made available to conduct the study.

More than two years had elapsed between the time we first began to discuss the project with the UPA and the parents, and the time the funds became available. During that time several vital changes had occurred.

As a result of the discussions they had with the UPA staff, and probably also with parents in other areas where SHCs had already been organized, the parents' interest in starting their own clinics was very high. Like the review committee and like us, they believed this was a worthwhile project. Their interest was primarily in its service aspects, the assistance they could obtain in dealing with significant and immediate problems. They could accept the research component, i.e., the evaluation of the service, as necessary to obtain funds for the service and as useful in obtaining a wider application for what they believed would be an effective program. However, they did not wish to be denied the service, nor even to have it deferred, in order to maximize the possibility of demonstrating its usefulness and applicability. They obtained funds through the school to conduct a SHC program, utilizing the past experience and cooperation of the UPA to direct and sustain their efforts. Therefore, when our funds became available we had to locate another population for our study.

Some preliminary discussions were held with parent groups in another area shortly after we knew the project had been approved, even before funds were actually available. Again the parents indicated an interest in organizing and conducting SHCs. It was agreed that we would start at the beginning of the next school year, which was then only a few months off, although the time we had to prepare the groups for the program was much less than we would have liked.

Just as we began our activities, the schools in New York City were closed by a teacher strike which lasted the better part of an entire semester. The parents concern with their children's education focused on getting the schools open. The subject matter we had intended to introduce in the SHCs, the T-Group, and at Patterson House took a distant back seat to the issue of the strike. When the schools did reopen, it was clear that the strike had left in its wake a climate of intense resentment, anger and suspiciousness. Relationships between the home and the school which had not been good in the past became more strained, and new strains had emerged between groups which had previously been allies. The process of gaining acceptance by the parents and school administration, both of whose cooperation was necessary if the project was to be carried out, became much more difficult. Recruiting and preparing the parents for the project had to begin all over again, and under much more difficult circumstances.

Changes in the Research Design

As the project began it became obvious that changes in the research design were necessary. The original proposal called for four conditions, a control and three experimental groups. The leaders in all groups were to obtain SHC leadership training. In addition, the leaders in Experimental I were to participate in a T-Group; the leaders in Experimental II would obtain experience as mental health aides at Patterson House; and the leaders in Experimental III would have both T-Group and mental health aide experience. We planned to work in eight schools in each of which there would be seven or eight parent leaders conducting two SHCs of fifteen parents each. These SHCs would continue for three years with the same participants (as much as possible). In an effort to maximize the stability of the groups, participation would be restricted to parents whose children were in kindergarten, first or second grade, so that their children would continue in attendance at the schools for at least three years. The eight schools would be formed into four pairs and assigned to the one control and three experimental groups. In total, 300 parents, were to be involved, 60 as leaders.

The shortened lead time resulting from the teacher strike and from having to go into schools other than the ones which we had already recruited made it difficult to organize as many SHCs as we wished. It was decided to eliminate Experimental III, which called for participation by the leaders in both the T-Group and Patterson House. Participants in this group would take the longest time to recruit, since it required more time out of their normal life program than Experimental I or II or Control, and required a more drastic revision of their daily schedules. By assigning the available participants to three groups instead of four, we would also increase the statistical power to detect change.

The effort to restrict the SHCs to regular participants was not successful. Many more parents than could be included on a regular basis knew the SHC was a place to bring "school problems", broadly defined. Many would drop in at one or several Clinic meetings to discuss a specific problem or issue. The leaders did not feel they could overlook the needs of this group in the interest of a tidy research design. While it was possible to maintain a fairly stable group of leaders, the intermittent participants set the tone of attendance at the SHCs, so that few of the "regular" members attended more than half of the sessions.

Under these circumstances it became not only difficult but unnecessary to maintain two SHCs in each school. An effort was made to organize a second SHC in several schools, but the unpredictability of short term participation and the varying attractiveness and "reputation" of the leaders resulted in greater participation in one, at the expense of the other. It was decided that one well-functioning Clinic in each school, open to all parents who wished to attend, would serve their needs better and cause less divisiveness and friction.

Administrative Problems

1) UPA Collaboration

The project was originally conceived and proposed as a collaboration between the PSC and the UPA, in which the latter would organize and conduct the SHCs and the former would add the appropriate "extra" components and evaluate effect of the additions. When the PSC was finally able to obtain funds for its part of the project, it was learned that the funds the UPA had counted on to conduct its part were no longer available. The UPA's interest in the project continued. They were prepared to provide consultation, help obtain school administration support and develop materials for the Clinics, but they did not have the funds to hire a field worker to organize and conduct the Clinics. The PSC took on this responsibility by utilizing the position of Research Assistant to perform the field work duties. The UPA provided guidance and supervision to the Research Assistant for her field work activities. The PSC provided training and supervision for her group process and research activities.

2) School Administration Changes

It was anticipated that there could be substantial turnover in the school population during the three years the SHCs were to be conducted and plans were made to minimize the effect of this turnover on the conduct of the project. Not anticipated were significant changes in the administration of the schools. These were of two kinds. First, there were frequent changes in the administrative personnel. For example, school principals came and went with unusual frequency. The eight schools in which we worked had a total of thirteen principals during the course of the project. The turnover in lesser administrators and in classroom and special teachers was even more extensive. This presented an added burden because, with each change, it was necessary to review the program with the new administrator and obtain approval to conduct the program in the school. Overall this did not seriously impede the conduct of the Clinics and turned out to be more of a nuisance than an obstruction. In all instances we obtained approval to conduct the project, generally enthusiastic approval, though for varying motives.

The second kind of administrative change, and one that did affect the conduct of the Clinics, was the shift in the Board of Education from central to community control. The effects of this change are described below, under the heading "Self-Help Clinic Program".

3) Co-option of Leaders

From time to time, leaders were hired away to full or part-time jobs by other community programs. While this was personally gratifying to them and to the project staff, it created a continuous series of emergencies in conducting the project. It reflected the success of the Clinics in involving, motivating and training parents, but it often made the conduct of the project an exercise in crisis living.

It may be that this situation was exacerbated when we were forced to recruit a different set of schools for the project. We shifted from the periphery of the ghetto to its heart, where all available schools were designated by the New York City Board of Education as "Special Service Schools", and therefore had priority for intervention funds. However, we probably would have run into the same situation in the original community in which we planned to work, for by no means were they without such funds for community programs. Indeed, it was because funds were available for them to conduct their own S.D. project that we had to move to another area.

Description of the Schools

In the first year, S.D.s were organized in seven schools in the Central Harlem Community. In each of the schools the enrollment was at least 98% black and Puerto Rican. This is a low income area, with many of the families on welfare, with incomes below the officially designated poverty level. One of the T-Group leaders described the neighborhood of the school in which the group met in this way.

"The surrounding area is dismal; tenements line the street, and garbage is often strewn all over. The large shopping area is located a few blocks away, which tends to offer some relief from this depressed area. There is violence occurring not only in the late evening, but often when people are just waking up at 6 or 7 in the morning. The scream of fire engines is often present. The school is close to a wide avenue, and although the school has a large play area which is sometimes open, most of the small children play outside on the streets, trying to emulate their elders. A favorite game consists of throwing the garbage out of the cans in order to use the cans as basketball hoops. There are groups of unemployed men lingering about, seemingly waiting for something to happen that never does."

There is an annual turnover of 25% in pupil enrollment. As cited previously, the turnover of faculty and administrative staff is equally high. As a result, school programs are in a greater state of flux than one would wish.

Reading scores in these schools are well below average. The median differences from the norms of the standardized reading test that is administered in New York City schools ranged from minus two months to minus seven months in the second grade, and from minus seven months to minus thirteen months in the fourth grade (with the exception of one school). Table I presents the average reading levels for the second and fourth grades at the start of the project. The growing decrement in reading ability indicates that the disparity between the performance of children in these schools and standardized test norms grows with each year the children spend in school.

TABLE I

AVERAGE READING LEVEL SCORES *

School	Second Grade	Fourth Grade
24	2.5	4.0
39	2.0	3.6
68	2.2	3.7
76	2.1	3.6
123	2.2	3.7
133	2.5	3.7
197	2.4	4.8
45	2.4	3.9
50	2.3	3.6

By 1968, when our project began, the Board of Education had created three experimental districts in which the elementary schools were administered by local community boards. Three of the schools in which SHCs were organized were in one of these districts, known as the IS 201 district. One school was assigned to each of our experimental groups and one to the control group.

At the start of the second year of the project two of the IS 201 schools, PS 24 and 39, were consolidated and moved to new quarters. Each had been a kindergarten through sixth grade school. They were moved to the same location where they became C.S. (Community School) 30 for kindergarden through second grade, and C.S. 31 for the third and fourth grades. A Clinic had been organized in P.S. 24 the previous Spring, while in P. S. 39 leaders had been assembled and their training begun. With the consolidation of the two schools, the two groups of leaders were merged and the SHC was continued in C.S. 30.

There were other changes in the administrative grouping of the schools during the course of the project. City-wide school district lines were altered twice, each change affecting at least one of our schools. The effort to balance the experimental conditions by assigning schools from different districts to each condition, was therefore frustrated. This was not considered a serious disruption of the design since the districts were contiguous and largely similar.

* Median city-wide score for second grade is 2.7; for 4th grade is 4.7.

At the beginning of the second project year it also became evident that only four of the seven schools in which SHCs had been organized were going to be able to maintain them. In addition to the loss of one school through the merger of P.S. 24 and 39, we withdrew from P.S. 113 and P.S. 129 because of their inability to move from planning and training to implementation of the program. The leaders with whom we were working at P.S. 113 and P.S. 129 were quickly employed by the schools and they decided they could not devote sufficient time to the project to carry it through successfully.

We therefore expanded into four additional schools, P.S. 123 and 197 which were also in the Central Harlem area of Manhattan, and P.S. 45 and 50 in the South Jamaica area of Queens.

The student enrollment in these schools was also predominently black, with a small number of Spanish speaking children. The neighborhoods of all four schools appeared to be slightly better than those of the schools already in the project. The socio-economic level of the residents in the new school areas was a bit higher, but there was still a preponderance of people enmeshed in poverty. With the exception of P.S. 197, the reading levels were similar to those in the schools continuing in the project. P.S. 123 and 197 were assigned to the control group and P.S. 45 and 50 to the experimental group. The recruitment procedures used in these schools were the same as those used in the schools already in the program.

Of these additional schools, all except P.S. 123 remained with the program to the end. Difficulties arose in P.S. 123 when we introduced one of our evaluation procedures. Although we had discussed this procedure in detail at the time of recruitment, the participants demurred because they did not wish to "be used" as subjects for research. This was apparently related to concurrent newspaper reports of two studies that had previously been conducted in the area which, the parents felt, had been published without their consent and reflected unfavorably upon them. It is our impression that this was not the only reason for the withdrawal. The parents who had been leaders in school activities in the past viewed the development of new leaders through the SHC program as a threat to their preeminence. By focusing upon the real concerns about being "used as guinea pigs" felt by many, they were able to eliminate this threat, at the cost of the program.

Recruitment

A significant feature of the SHCs was its independence from Board of Education authority, though the meetings which were held in the schools dealt with school problems. To underline this independence, the parents were approached first in organizing the Clinics. Only after they agreed to develop such a program did they solicit the support and cooperation of the school administration. This was in contrast to many parent participation programs in the school which are administered by school authorities and handed down to the parents. This fact, along with the pervasive distrust of faculty and school administration on the part of the parents following the teacher strike, dictated a careful approach to the recruitment of participants in the project.

The following procedure was adopted:

1) A UPA representative approached Parent Association officers of the chosen school and described the program in general terms.

2) If these officers displayed interest in the program, the representative and the Research Assistant (who was to serve as the field worker in organizing the SHCs) attended a Parent Association Executive Board meeting to describe the program in detail. If the Board approved, its members then suggested parents who might be suitable leaders for the Clinics. These were parents who had been identified in Parent Association activities as having leadership potential.

3) The leaders were then recruited from among those suggested by the Executive Board of the Parents Association. This required considerable tact and discretion in order to obtain suitable leaders without offending others and jeopardizing their support for the program.

4) The field workers conducted a training program to prepare the leaders to conduct the Clinics.

5) When the leaders were ready to start the Clinics, they and the field worker attended a Parent Association meeting to explain the program and recruit parents.

At most of the schools in which we worked, P.A. meetings tended to draw very small numbers of parents. Effective parent recruitment required other steps. Flyers were prepared and sent home with children and posted in apartment house lobbies and store windows. Leaders stationed themselves in key communication points, e.g. outside the schools at dismissal time, the neighborhood laundromat, to speak to the mothers and invite them to the SHC. Events of special appeal to parents were scheduled to attract them to their first SHC. Some of these events were drug education discussions, a model class of a new reading method being introduced in one school, and a similar demonstration of a "new math" class in another school.

The PSC's approved procedures for obtaining "informed consent" were observed throughout.

In recruiting the leaders, the following points were made. 1) Three kinds of training would be available: SHC leadership training, T-Group and Patterson House internship. 2) Assignment to these programs would be by school, so that all the leaders in any one school would be in the same program. 3) This assignment would be made by the project staff, with the concurrence of the leaders. 4) The purpose of the evaluation was outlined and the evaluation procedures described. 5) The duration of the project was specified. In recruiting the parents for participation in the SHCs, they were told that the SHCs would be parent administered and controlled; that they would meet every week, and their regular attendance was sought; that some of them would be asked to participate in evaluation interviews, the nature and purpose of which was explained; that the program would end June, 1971.

Only after the parents at each school were committed to the program was the school administration approached to invite their support. The objectives and procedures of the SHCs were described and the roles of the PSC and the UPA in the development and implementation of the program were identified. It was made clear that the parents would control the direction and content of the Clinics and that this autonomy would have to be respected by the school administrators.

Nine of the schools we approached displayed some interest in the program. In three of them, however, a sufficient number of suitable leaders could not be recruited in time to initiate our activities. The program was initiated in the other six schools.

The Self Help Clinic Program

As set forth by the UPA, the aim of the SHC program was anything but modest. Its objective was to make the parents more aware of their role in the educational process. To achieve this, they recruited indigenous parents who were trained to establish and conduct SHCs in the school attended by their children.

1) Leadership training

The parents recruited to be leaders were asked to commit themselves to remain with the program for its duration. The leaders at each school met with the UPA field worker for orientation, and then leaders from pairs of schools were organized into Clusters for leadership training. These Clusters met weekly and, at the start, discussed techniques of parent recruitment, negotiating with the school administration for permission to conduct the program, and other issues that arose in establishing the SHCs.

In the course of the training, the field worker made extensive use of training guides for indigenous leaders. These guides were prepared by the UPA expressly for the SHC program. In addition to suggestions for recruiting and involving parents in the Clinics, the guides dealt with curriculum material, homework, Board of Education policy with respect to report cards, promotion, and discipline in the schools. Content included subject matter the children were learning at school and ways in which the parent could support the efforts of the school by helping their children at home. The leaders were encouraged to assume responsibility even in the Cluster meetings. They would take turns preparing a topic for presentation at the Cluster meeting, and would conduct these meetings under the field worker's observation. Leadership style, clarity of presentation, degree of preparedness, utilization of outside resources were discussed following such presentations.

Throughout the training the informal quality of the SHC was emphasized. The leaders were encouraged to maintain a conversational tone and to permit the discussion to proceed at a pace congenial to the parents. While the leaders were fortified with material to present at the Clinics, they were cautioned to be alert to the immediate concerns of the parents, to encourage them to talk

about those concerns. They were shown how they could use the experience of other members of the Clinic in dealing with individual problems, and how to obtain more expert assistance when it was necessary.

After approximately two months of weekly Cluster meetings, the leaders set about organizing the SHCs in their respective schools. The field worker sat in on the first few Clinic meetings at each school to offer support and guidance. At the beginning she was called upon frequently between sessions for assistance in recruitment and in planning for each session. This was particularly true in the Manhattan schools, so that for a while the Clusters met biweekly, and special meetings with the leaders at each school were scheduled for the alternate weeks. The Queens schools required less special attention in getting started and were able to maintain their weekly Cluster meetings.

2) Clinic sessions.

In accordance with the program design, the leaders sought to recruit parents who were willing to commit themselves to regular, weekly SHC attendance for the duration of the program. Few parents were immediately willing to make such a commitment, but many were interested to come and see what it was about.

At the start, the focus of the Clinics was on the UPA curriculum materials. The "new math" was a popular leadoff topic that intrigued many parents. But as the Clinics developed and the parents were encouraged to raise school-related problems for discussion, the message got around that here was a place to come for help with a wide variety of problems. Relationships with teachers and school administrators was a frequent discussion issue, in the wake of the bad feelings generated by the teacher strike. More personal problems such as discipline and drug use was very much on the minds of the parents. With the advent of decentralization and local community school boards, another set of problems was introduced. The UPA was called upon to develop manuals dealing with these issues, parent-school relationships, local school boards, drugs. The character of the Clinics changed. There was less interest in learning about curriculum and study problems, more concern with these new and pressing issues, each of which appealed to different parents. As a result, attendance was intermittent rather than regular, with parents attending when they had specific problems to discuss. There were from three to seven parents at each school who attended at least half of the sessions, and were considered the "regulars".

Patterson House

Arrangements for training SHC parent leaders as mental health aides at Patterson House were concluded prior to submission of the project proposal, and a letter to that effect from the Wiltwyck School for Boys, the parent agency of Patterson House, was included in the proposal. Soon after the grant for conducting the project was authorized, a meeting was held with the Patterson staff to confirm the arrangements and set a tentative starting date. This date had to be postponed because the teacher strike delayed the start of the project.

In the Spring of 1969, when we were ready to assign leaders for training, it was discovered that Patterson House was undergoing administrative and program changes. In the ensuing two years there were three changes of administration. In all, we dealt with four different directors of Patterson House. Each one saw the value of continuing our collaboration and arranged to do so. Finally, in the fall of 1969 the turbulent situation at Patterson House culminated in a decision by its parent agency to close this facility.

Because of the administrative turmoil at Patterson House, the training program for SHC leaders was never properly implemented. Leaders from two schools spent several months there. They reported that they were not receiving proper training, supervision was minimal at best, and frequently the leaders were filling in for staff shortages that existed in the transition from one administration to another.

Because the leaders did not obtain the kind of experience at Patterson House that was outlined in the proposal, nor a suitable equivalent, it was not possible to test the hypothesis that mental health aide training is a productive supplement to SHC leadership training, in modifying parent-child behavior. In fact, because the training obtained at Patterson House was negligible, this group will be included with the control group in our research design.

Parent Enrollment

A total of 223 parents formally enrolled in the program (Table II) by completing the Enrollment Form (see Appendix). This form served to meet the requirements for use of human subjects for research, and was intended as a commitment to regular participation in the SHCs. As the program developed, the Clinics were opened to all parents including those who did not complete the Enrollment Forms. At each session, an attendance sheet was passed around and those present were asked to sign. On the basis of the signatures on these sheets, 951 parents attended one or more sessions of the SHCs. It was observed that not all parents signed these sheets, which means that a larger number actually participated in the program.

The Manhattan schools averaged 165 different parent-attendees each, while the Queens schools averaged only 62. The difference is partly the result of the shorter length of time that the program ran in the Queens schools. It probably also reflects the difference in the way the program served the parents in these two areas. In Queens there was less need to provide short term crisis intervention for school, family, health and financial problems. The leaders could therefore focus more on developing and maintaining a core group of parents, in the manner envisaged in our original plans. The higher average number of Clinic sessions attended by the Queens parents as compared with those in Manhattan (see Table VI) would support this interpretation.

TABLE II

PARENT ENROLLMENT

SCHOOL	No. of Leaders	No. of Parents	Total Participants	Enrollment Forms*
68	9	93	102	32
133	4	179	183	22
197	8	149	157	31
Total Control	21	421	442	85
30	8	174	182	35
76	9	194	203	52
45	6	45	51	23
50	10	63	73	28
Total T-Group	33	476	509	138
Total	54	897	951	223

*Number of leaders and parents completing Enrollment Forms

Leader Attendance

There were three types of meetings that required leader attendance. Schools were paired according to experimental condition. For each pair there were regular Cluster meetings at which the leaders presented problems they experienced in implementing the SEC program. Thus the control group Cluster consisted of leaders from P.S. 197 and 123 (P.S. 123 later withdrew from the program). P.S. 68 and 133, originally assigned to Patterson House for training as mental health aides, formed another Cluster. As previously explained, this training did not materialize, so we have assigned these schools to the control group. There were two Clusters for the T-Group participants, P.S. 30 and 76 in Manhattan, and P.S. 45 and 50 in Queens.

The leaders were paid $2.00 an hour for the time they spent at Patterson House. At the outset, they were not paid for the time they attended the Cluster meetings. During the second year of the project we were able to develop funds to pay leaders $2.00 an hour for Cluster meeting attendance, and did so till the conclusion of the project.

1) Cluster meetings

The Clusters were to meet once a week. At the start, however, the leaders in the Manhattan schools needed a great deal of assistance from the field worker in recruitment, negotiations with the schools, even conduct of the SLCs. As a result, the field worker did not have time for more than bi-weekly Cluster meetings. As the leaders became more adept at conducting the Clinics, the field worker was called upon less frequently for daily management crises, and reinstated the weekly schedule of Cluster meetings. The Queens leaders, too, needed help at the start in conducting the Clinics, but the field worker was able to provide this assistance while continuing the weekly Cluster meetings.

Toward the end of the project we did not have sufficient funds to pay for weekly Cluster meetings. We informed the leaders that they would be reimbursed for two Cluster meetings each month. The Queens leaders decided to continue meeting on a weekly basis. The Manhattan leaders decided to meet only when they were reimbursed. Although the Manhattan leaders had participated in Cluster meetings without reimbursement for the first year of the project, once it had been defined as a paid activity they were no longer willing to participate in it without payment.

TABLE III presents the summary of Cluster meeting attendance. It will be seen that, despite the fact that the program lasted a shorter time in the Queens schools (P.S. 45 and 50), they had more Cluster meetings than the Manhattan group schools. The explanation is that the Queens group met weekly throughout the program, while the Manhattan groups did not, for reasons presented above.

2) Patterson House

Nine leaders, 5 from P.S. 68 and 4 from P.S. 133 participated in the Patterson House program before this phase of the project was terminated because the Patterson House staff was unable to provide the kind of training that had been originally agreed upon. The average number of sessions attended by each leader was a little over six (See TABLE IV). In contrast, the original plans called for each of 15 leaders to attend 44 sessions at Patterson House.

3) T-Group

The Manhattan T-Group met 54 times, with better attendance by the leaders from P.S. 76 than those from C.S. 30 (See TABLE V). On the average, each leader from P.S. 76 attended 37 sessions, while each leader from C.S. 30 attended only 12. At least two factors account for this difference. First, the program was better organized in P.S. 76 than in C.S. 30. Second, the leaders from C.S. 30 were not able to arrange for the use of a meeting room on the evening the T-Group met, so that all meetings were held at P.S. 76. Many parents felt it was unsafe to go out in the evening and were afraid to travel the one mile to P.S. 76, despite the fact that they were provided with the taxi fare if they traveled together.

The Queens T-Group met 36 times with each leader attending an average of 27 sessions. This group met at P.S. 50, but the leaders from P.S. 45 attended as frequently as their hosts because they met in the daytime in a less threatening neighborhood.

TABLE III

Attendance at Cluster Meetings

Condition	School	No. of Cluster Sessions	Total Cluster Attendance	Average No. of Sessions Attended Per Leader
Control	197	25	111	14
	68 & 133	30	178	22
			108	27
Control Sub total		55	397	20
T-Group	30 & 76	33	113	19
			207	23
	45 & 50	40	194	32
			270	30
T-Group Subtotal		73	784	26
Grand Total		128	1181	24

TABLE IV

Attendance at Patterson House

School	No of Leaders Attending	No. of Sessions	Average No. of Sessions Attended Per Leader
68	5	35	7.0
133	4	22	5.5
Totals	9	57	6.3

TABLE V

Attendance at T-Group

School	No. of Leaders Attending	No. of T-Group Sessions	Average No. of Sessions Attended Per Leader
30	7	54	12
76	8		37
45	5	36	27
50	9		27
Totals	19	90	26

Self Help Clinic Attendance

The data in TABLE VI describe the attendance at the SHCs. The figures include both leaders and parents.

The number of Clinic sessions and the total attendance varies with the date of inception of the program; high in P.S. 30, 68 and 76 which were the first schools to start, low in P.S. 45 and 50 which were the last. In general, there were between 30 and 35 SHC sessions in each school, each academic year.

Total attendance was computed by counting the signatures on attendance sheets for each school. Since not all the parents who attended Clinics signed, this is a minimum figure.

Among the seven schools, the average attendance at the Clinics ranged from 10 to 16. There is no marked difference between the control and T-Group schools on this factor. There is a slight indication that the Clinics conducted by the leaders who participated in the T-Group had a more regular clientele than the Clinics conducted by the control group leaders. The average number of sessions attended by a parent from the control group was 5.5; for the experimental, or T-Group, it was 6.7. The anomaly in these figures is P.S. 68, one of the control schools. The parents in this school attended an average of 9.1 Clinic sessions, the highest for any school. The other two control schools were the lowest on this measure.

TABLE VI

Self-Help Clinic Attendance

School	No. of SHC Sessions	Total Attendance	Average Attendance Per Sessions	Average No. of Sessions Attended Per Parent
68	88	932	11	9.1
133	54	732	14	4.0
197	50	758	15	4.8
Total Control	192	2422	13	5.5
30	90	1061	12	5.8
76	80	1312	16	6.4
45	44	450	10	8.8
50	46	580	13	8.0
Total T-Group	260	3403	13	6.7
Total	452	5825	13	6.1

T-Group

There were two T-Groups in the study. The first, which included leaders from C.S. 30 (originally P.S. 24) and P.S. 76 Manhattan, began to meet in the Spring of 1969 and continued to the end of the school year of 1971 when the project concluded. The second, which included leaders from P.S. 45 and P.S. 50 in Queens, began in the Spring of 1970 and continued to the end of the project. The Manhattan group met for 2 1/2 years, the Queens group for 1 1/2 years.

There were two leaders for the T-Groups. The first one conducted both groups until December, 1970, when she left to accept a position in another city. The second one conducted both groups from December, 1970 till the end of the project. Both were trained as social workers, female, black, in their 40's, with long professional experience in working with children and parents, and in conducting groups. Each in her own style sought to advance the objectives of the study, viz., to assist the parents in developing parent-child relationships that would promote self-direction and self-control in the children. The styles that they employed in conducting the T-Groups were quite different. The first T-Group leader utilized many training "exercises", including role-playing, to promote individual, exploratory leadership styles among the SHC leaders. The second T-Group leader focused more on issues of interpersonal relationships that were obstructive to reliance upon one's self.

The two T-Groups were quite dissimilar in make-up, orientation and functioning. The Manhattan group was composed of a clique of old-timers whose median age was in the mid-forties, with many years of experience in school activities, and a younger group, much newer to the schools who were being trained as the "next generation" of parent leaders. Young and old alike were contending with the ravages of poverty, a crime infested area, sub-standard housing and an insufficiency of the necessities of life.

Both T-Group leaders described this group as authoritarian in orientation, with the members placing a premium upon formal, structured communication. They expected the leader to assume the role of a teacher and treat them as students, and resisted any effort on the part of the leader to deviate from this role. At the same time they experienced considerable anxiety and difficulty in dealing with written material, or anything resembling a test situation. When the T-Group leaders tried to evoke feelings and spontaneous group discussion, the parents became anxious about the lack of structure in the group.

The formal air maintained by the group was evidenced by their referring to each other by last names, and sitting at the meetings with hands in lap waiting to be recognized before they would speak. Participation had to be evoked and was rarely given spontaneously. The group members required overt, active support and direction from the leader and were not attuned to the subtleties of non-verbal communication. They suggested that the leader demonstrate her support and caring explicitly by providing coffee and cookies at each session.

It was difficult to develop group cohesiveness. They divided along two lines: first, according to the school from which they came (C.S. 30 or P.S. 76); second, by age, with the older leaders taking responsibility for

making decisions for their respective schools.

The situation was anomalous. The older leaders were recognized as the "strength", yet were least receptive to change. The younger women in the group had received direct help from the older women and had developed an obvious dependency upon them. (There was one exception and this woman later dropped out of the program, perhaps because she had never developed a close tie to the older members and had no real place within the group's internal alignment). Attempts to weaken this dependent relationship were met with anger and hostility from both sides. It was left to the older women to mobilize the others to challenge certain school policies which were objectionable to the entire group. For the most part, their methods appeared to be directed more at maintaining a loyal core of followers than at reaching an acceptable resolution of the problem. The closer they came to the core issues, the greater were the feelings of helplessness among the younger members.

The Queens parents were a very different group. Their ages ranged from the mid-twenties to the mid-thirties. In contrast to the Manhattan group members, all were married, with families intact. The majority either owned their own homes or were striving to do so. Most had grown up in the New York City area (many in the Manhattan group had migrated from the South) and all appeared to be in a better economic situation than they had experienced as children. The housing in the neighborhood presented a contrasting picture. Side by side there were substandard buildings, new Housing Authority projects, fifty-year-old large frame houses, new two-family homes, and marginal industrial and service businesses.

Unlike the Manhattan group, the Queens Cluster rapidly developed into a cohesive group, with feelings open and shared, with direct communication and feedback. Here, too, there were parents from two schools but, where the Manhattan parents were not able to move away from their school-based loyalties, these members expanded their affiliations to include parents from the "other" school. All of the Queens women felt strongly about helping their schools provide a better education for their children. They were very active, but saw as their mission the activation of others. At the start of the project they were new to participation in school activities, but they learned quickly about the school system, community school board functioning, the strengths and weaknesses of their respective schools and parents' associations.

From the beginning, the meetings of the Queens group were lively. If there was any problem in group functioning, it was that too many would try to talk at once. The members enjoyed the sessions thoroughly and attended regularly. They were able to utilize theoretical material and readily absorb the material that was presented to them. The group leaders were impressed by the ability of the members to apply what they learned to reality situations.

As an example of how they functioned was their work on the NASA exercise, a group consensus project, conducted by the first T-Group leader. In the first part of the exercise, the participants, working individually, were asked to give priority rankings to a series of survival equipment items for use on a moon trip. They were then asked to do the task again, utilizing group consensus to arrive at a new priority rating. The leader reported that "the score achieved by the group working together was better than the

best individual score, and better than the score of almost any group that I've ever worked with. They used each others' resources extremely well and this was their common pattern of working together.

While the leaders attending the Queens T-Group were typical of a segment of the parent population of their schools, there were many other parents whose economic situation, educational status and family cohesion were not as good. The neighborhoods in which P.S. 45 and P.S. 50 are located are black ghettos containing considerable poverty. There is widespread unemployment and under-employment, school dropout rates are high, and crime and drug use are prevalent.

Each of the T-Group leaders approached these disparate groups in her own style. The first leader gave the following report.

"The purpose of the training sessions, as I ultimately defined it, was to train the members in leadership style, utilizing the group-centered process to expose them to a style of leadership different from the leader-centered model with which they had grown up.

"The attempt was to train them in a process that would enable them to help the SHC parents define a problem, arrive at a series of alternative solutions, and choose the one with which they felt most comfortable. This minimized the need for leaders to feel that they had to be experts in all areas with which the group dealt....The attempt then, as it related to child-rearing, was not to present formulas about how to raise children,but to introduce them to a process through which they could approach problems in a spirit of exploration, with a willingness to try alternatives."

The groups looked at different leadership styles, ways of communicating, the helping process, and the development of a cooperation model. In all of these areas they developed theories of relationship out of their personal and group experiences. These theories were then challenged in planned T-Group exercises, with a great emphasis on role playing and group problem solving. The alternative modes of relationship were helpful in exploring the full range of practical problems that were brought to the group by its members. Throughout, the aim was to enhance personal growth by sensitizing the members to their own feelings and the feelings of others, and to legitimatize feedback as a major tool for learning and for building interpersonal relationships. There were differences in the techniques utilized in the two groups, and in the frequency of their use. Role playing was utilized more frequently in the Manhattan group in an effort to loosen the personal and status-linked rigidities of its members. Its use was not as necessary in the more flexible Queens group, and the major purpose for employing it there was so the members could become acquainted with the procedure for use in the groups which they led.

Because the first T-Group leader left on short notice, with insufficient preparation of the members for her departure, the transition to the second T-Group leader was rocky, more so with the Manhattan group. The new leader's approach focused more on the analysis of feelings and interpersonal reactions, less on utilization of exercises to develop leadership skills or to advance the group process.

Faced with this sharp change in both person and style, the Manhattan group regressed to its position of relating in a very formalized manner, insisting again that the leader act as a didactic teacher, dispensing knowledge to them, the passive pupils. In reporting on this experience, the new leader stated, "My work with the group started with a negative quality. The former leader did not formally introduce me to the group and did not have the opportunity to say goodbye to them, though they were aware that she was leaving. The group was not able to work out their feelings on a verbal level about the former leader leaving, nor to discuss the circumstances." The disappointment, hurt and resentment that the members felt were directed at the new leader, and took the form of comparing her unfavorably with the previous leader and questioning her identification with, and understanding of, the black ghetto. There was a period of crisis during which the group resisted tenaciously any effort to discuss their feelings openly. Through a number of shaky sessions in which the relationship between the leader and the group was discussed, the leader demonstrated, by example, the inevitability of both positive and negative feelings in interpersonal relationships and therefore their acceptability without stigma, and illustrated how such feelings could be used constructively rather than defensively. While this did not result in any dramatic transformation of the group members, it turned out to be a salutory experience and cleared the air sufficiently for the group to continue to function.

Building on this crucial encounter, the leader's persistent refusal to concede to their evasiveness when feelings came into play, enabled the group to do things it had not done previously.

In one instance a younger group member lost her food money and presented her dilemma at the meeting. The others took up a collection to help her out, and in the process explored feelings of intrusion, charity, dependency and motherliness. In the course of this exploration the older members became aware of the strings they attached to the help and guidance they provided to the younger members of the group. The group was able to address itself to the hierarchical relationships that existed among its members, to good effect. In another instance, toward the end of the project, one of the younger participants had observed one of the older members mistreating her (the older member's) children. She brought this to the attention of the group. This older member had long since learned to verbalize such concepts as discussing problems with children, asking the child to suggest solutions, and parents learning from children. The group was able to bring the contradiction of words and actions into the open. Their manner was firm but sufficiently supportive so that this mother did not crumble or run in the face of the criticism. This experience revealed a marked change in the relationship between the younger and older members, one in which the younger members had an enhanced feeling of self worth.

The group also demonstrated a developing ability to design their own learning experiences. For a leaderless session, they chose to explore the topic of drug use. They performed their own research, developed their own materials, and designed role-playing situations between teenagers and mothers. At a later stage in the group, they all participated in outlining concretely, with blackboard diagrams, how the younger members could make use of the older members for support, consultation and information about the schools, without

being completely subordinated by them. On this issue there was still a gap between theory and practice when the project ended. The younger members did demonstrate more initiative in many instances. However, in showdown disputes with the schools, the older members would not share their leadership role with the younger ones. The group as a whole, however, functioned much more effectively in dealing with the school authorities.

The Queens group reacted to the change in leadership differently. Their upset about the abruptness of the change did not lead them to denigrate either the former leader or the new one. They felt their experience with the previous leader was beneficial to them, though they wished they had had more time to effect the separation. In time, they came to prefer the more analytic approach of the second leader. Yet they were very appreciative of the experience with the first. They worked through their feelings about the change in leadership rather quickly, and were soon examining their relationships with each other, their families, their schools, their communities.

One of their first concerns was the apathy they observed in the community, and they addressed themselves to motivating people to attend the SHCs and other meetings at the schools. Among themselves they explored the apathy first in terms of attitudes of whites toward blacks, and then in terms of their own negative attitudes and feelings toward some black people. The major task became understanding some of their own feelings in order to improve their ability to relate to others. The group responded well to these discussions and among other subjects covered were parent-child relationships, husband-wife relationships, relationships with in-laws, child development, role of women, and the role of the black man.

The parent leaders from P.S. 45 and P.S. 50 met in T-Group sessions at P.S. 50. There they were constantly faced with obstacles to the conduct of the project, erected by the school administration, despite the fact that approval of the principal was obtained before the project was introduced. For example, they would be assigned a room in which to meet, only to discover it was already occupied; or worse, they would be evicted in the middle of the meeting for other school activities. They felt suitable arrangements could be made (as later proved to be the case) and identified this behavior as pressure from school authorities against a group of activist parents in its midst.

Later, when several of the parent-leaders from P.S. 50 were offered and accepted School Aide jobs, another form of administrative harassment became apparent. Although the principal agreed to permit these employees to maintain the SHC leadership roles, and had specifically approved their involvement in the Cluster meetings, T-Group meetings and Clinic sessions necessary for the conduct of the project, his staff would frequently call them out of these meetings for "special chores". In the T-Group meetings the parents were outspoken about their annoyance and resentment at such treatment, but were unwilling to confront the principal. The group members from P.S. 45 were particularly irked by this situation but held back from forcing a confrontation with their "hosts" from P.S. 50.

In an effort to bring feelings to the surface, the T-Group leader asked each group member to "draw a picture of yourself in relation to the group." Typically, the drawings of the parents from P.S. 50 showed group members sitting together whereas the "visitors" from P.S. 45 drew themselves as apart from the group. In the discussion that evolved from these drawings, the members from P.S. 45 expressed their annoyance with the "host" members for not providing a suitable meeting room and for not dealing with the disruptions caused by their being called out of the meetings. They were also able to identify, however, with the predicament of the working members, their feeling of dependence upon the principal who employed them, the gratification they received from working, and their fear of jeopardizing their jobs if they confronted the principal with their complaints.

Following this discussion the members from P.S. 50 did speak to the principal, though not without fear and difficulty. They succeeded in solving the problem of the meeting room entirely satisfactorily, and in decreasing the frequency of the "emergency" disruptions. Following this critical experience the group appeared to function with noticeably increased effectiveness.

Perhaps the most dramatic event in the life of the group occurred when the P.S. 50 members presented a proposal for Title I funds to the District Office of the Board of Education. One part of the proposal called for additional black teachers, another related to the fact that new teachers used in the primary grades seldom stayed at the school more than one year. The group felt the teachers got their experience in the ghetto schools but few stayed to use that experience. The proposal asked for the teachers to make a commitment to remain for more than one year. They developed the proposal themselves and invited the reactions and suggestions of the T-Group leader and the UPA trainer only after it was completed. They had agreed upon a problem and had arrived at a consensus about the policy they would recommend. Furthermore, they put themselves on the line in bringing their own thinking to the administration. Although the proposal was not accepted, it created quite a stir, and they were able to view what they had done as a positive achievement.

Another example of their ability to work together effectively occurred when a first grade learning disabilities class was formed, with two teachers and an aide assigned to the class. The parents of the children assigned to this class were not informed by the school of the reasons for this decision. They were angered by the high-handedness of the administration and appealed to the SHC leaders for help in disbanding this class. The SHC leaders brought this situation to the T-Group and explored their mixed feelings: on the one hand, the potential value of such a class and, on the other, administrative arrogance and high-handedness. Following this session they were able to clarify the issues for the parents and lead a protest, not against the institution of the new class, but against the administrative arrogance and secrecy. They shared with the principal the feelings of the other mothers and their own concerns about how the school alienates parents.

We have no data to evaluate the relative effectiveness of the leadership styles represented by these two T-Group leaders. It is clear that the Manhattan group took more easily to the more structured exercises of the

first leader, while the Queens group preferred the more unstructured interaction promoted by the second. However, we have no way of knowing whether group preference correlated positively with group progress.

Both T-Group leaders felt that the Queens group made more progress than the Manhattan group in developing insights into themselves and putting these insights to use in their relationships with others. Yet, in this regard, the Queens group was more advanced than the Manhattan group at the start. Given the more difficult life circumstances of the members of the Manhattan group and the quality of interpersonal experience they brought to the group, their achievement in this area was impressive.

Procedures for Evaluating Changes in Parent-Child Relationships

The research plan called for the use of two procedures to evaluate changes in parent-child relationships.

1) Structured Situations

In interviews at the beginning and at the end of the study, the parents were asked to describe how they would deal with a series of situations involving parent-child relationships, covering a variety of experiences encountered in every day living. These same situations were also presented to the children of these parents. The child was asked to describe how his or her parent would deal with this situation.

Eighteen structured situations were pilot tested in the Upper West Harlem--Washington Heights neighborhood, the area which had been originally selected for conducting the project. On the basis of this experience, eight of these were discarded since they did not contribute usefully to the objectives of the study. The pilot study also permitted the training of interviewers under field conditions. Copies of the structured situations are included in the Appendix.

2) Inventory Data

An inventory of children's reports of parental behavior has been developed by Schaefer.[1] This inventory was to be modified to fit the age, language ability and life circumstances of our subject population, and administered to both parents and children.

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1. Earl S. Schaefer, "Children's reports of parental behavior; an inventory," Child Development Vol. 36, No. 2, June 1965

After several attempts at modifying these scales, it was clear that we were not successful in adapting this inventory to provide information about our subject population that would advance the objectives of this study. The scales had neither the advantage of providing standardized scores to which we could compare our group's responses, nor did it allow for the spontaneous portrayal of authentic reactions. Moreover, the modified versions did not discriminate among the parents in our pilot population.

3) Parent-Child Apperception Test (PCAT)

A projective technique patterned upon the Family Interaction Apperception Test [1] was substituted for the inventory data. This set of nine pictures presented scenes of parent-child interactions, and consisted of four pictures borrowed from the FIAT and five pictures drawn to our specification. Each picture presented an ambiguous conflict situation similar in content to the verbal situations. The interviewee was requested to tell the interviewer "a story about what is happening with the people in the picture and how you think it will turn out." On the basis of the pilot study one of the pictures borrowed from the FIAT was dropped.

4) Activity Calendar

Another short scale called "Activity Calendar" was developed. Based on the hypothesis that the program would result in observable changes in the life activities of the participants, it was aimed at discovering what shifts resulted in their social, recreational, volunteer and vocational activities. It was to be administered at the beginning and end of the study and required each parent to record the number of times during the week immediately preceding the completion of the Calendar, she had engaged in each of a series of activities. A copy of the Activity Calendar is included in the Appendix.

Results

Records of School Performance

Whenever we solicited the approval of the school authorities to conduct the project in the schools, we also discussed the need to evaluate the program and the need for certain school records for this purpose. Specifically, we asked for access to achievement records and teachers' reports on the children's performance. The response varied. In some instances we had to obtain clearance from the district office. Some schools required parental release forms; others made their records readily available.

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1. Salvador Minuchin, Bernard G. Guerney Jr., and Shirley Elbert "A method for the clinical study of family interaction, "Journal of America Orthopsychiatry October, 1, 1964.

When we sought the teachers' reports of school adjustment and performance we discovered there were few such records available. (Written notes about pupil behavior appear to have diminished markedly with the adoption in 1969 by the Board of Education of the policy of making available to the parents all such records about their children.)

With respect to achievement records, we decided to focus upon the reading test scores as a measure of school performance since it is the most sensitive single measure of school success, and, presumably, was available in standardized form in all schools. This, too, turned out to be illusory. For many of the children the reading scores at either the beginning or the end of the project, or both, were missing. In other instances, scores obtained from different schools were not comparable. There was an insufficient number of usable scores to warrant analysis. It is not possible, therefore, to make any statement about the effect of this project on the school performance of the children.

Changes in Daily Activities of the Parents

The Activity Calendar was designed to discover changes that may have occurred during the course of the project in the activities of participants. It was presented to them in the course of one of the Clinic sessions in the context of "How do you spend your spare time?" The discussion which ensued following the completion of these reports usually dealt with the constructive use of spare time, particularly in relation to their children. A comparison of the information elicited from these discussions with the completed Activity Calendars indicated that, for many parents, the data contained in the Calendars reflected how they felt they should spend their time, rather than how they actually did. Efforts to explain the purpose of these reports did not overcome the apprehension of many participants that the data might be used by somebody, somewhere, for judgmental purposes.

Since the data so obtained was not useful, we interviewed sixty-eight parents at the end of the project to determine what changes in their paid employment, volunteer activities and formal educational activities had occurred since the beginning of the project. Fifty-four of these parents had been leaders during the course of the project. The other fourteen were among the more regular participants in the SHCs. TABLE VII compares this data for the control and experimental groups.

For the experimental group, 48% were engaged in the listed activities at the start of the project, 90% at the end. For the control group, 52% were so involved at the start, 69% at the end. In addition, many of the parents in the experimental, or T-Group, schools changed from part-time to full-time work during the course of the project. For the total group, 50% were engaged in the listed activities at the start of the project, 81% at its conclusion.

There is no comparison data for a group of parents who did not participate in the SHC project, but the changes that occurred in the project group are impressive in their own right. The participation in this project enabled these parents to develop skills and self-confidence which led to gainful employment, or further self-development activities. Most of these activities consisted of further schooling, or paid and/or volunteer work at the community level. However, two parents were tapped for assignments at the city-wide level, one on the mayor's committee to monitor the performance of the new community school boards, another on the narcotics task force of the city wide Board of Education.

Much of the increase in the number of parents working, especially in full-time jobs, resulted from leaders being hired away by other school or community programs. They were hired for such jobs as family, educational or teacher aides.

TABLE VII

Change in Daily Activities

	Control		Experimental		Total	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Paid employment	14	17	18	22	32	39
Part time	5	5	12	4	17	9
Full time	9	12	6	18	15	30
Non-PTA school volunteer	0	1	1	4	1	5
Vocational training	0	1	0	3	0	4
College	1	1	0	4	1	5
City-wide school board activities	0	0	0	2	0	2
Totals	15	20	19	35	34	55
Number of interviewees	29		39		68	

The Structured Situations and PCAT Interviews

1. Evaluation procedure

The pilot data were valuable not only in selecting the appropriate Structured Situations items and PCAT pictures for use in the main study, but also in the development of measurement scales for rating the responses. Initially, we attempted to develop a three, then a five, point Likert scale that would rate each item for the presence of such behavior as parental control acceptance, possessiveness, and the ability to deal with the child's behavior and feelings. These attempts were unproductive for the scores which were obtained did not lead to meaningful, macroscopic statements about the subjects. Our next attempt was to utilize a forced-choice Q-sort. The protocols were to be assigned a relative rating along each of five dimensions. The change in the placement of the experimental group relative to the control, between pre- and post-sorts, was to be measured on each dimension.

The five dimensions were:

1. The effectiveness of the parent in dealing with the child's conflicts and aggressive behavior.

2. The effectiveness of the parent in responding to the child's needs.

3. The effectiveness of the parent in responding to and reinforcing the child's positive experiences (eg., tenderness, friendship, achievement).

4. The effectiveness of the parent in dealing with the child's negative feelings (eg., fear, depression, disappointment, unhappiness).

5. The effectiveness of the parent in dealing with school authorities.

It is obvious that the crucial element in the criterion was the parent's effective action. Good intentions or response by formula was insufficient.

This technique worked well for eighteen trial protocols, but became unmanageable for the ninety-one sets of parent and child, pre-and post-interviews. The final decision was to rate each Structured Situation and PCAT response on a five point scale for the "effective mother-ineffective mother" continuum. For each item, a range of positive, negative and neutral responses were identified and related to the scale. Ratings were then assigned to each item of each pre-project interview. The children's protocols were rated on the same scale, using the same guidelines that were used for rating the parents' protocols. These were blind ratings, for the raters did not know to which group, experimental or control, any protocol belonged.

Post-project interviews were compared with pre-project interviews, and a rating assigned based upon the degree and direction of change observed. Each item was rated on the following scale: 1- strong negative change; 2- some negative change; 3- no change; 4- some positive change; 5- strong positive change. It was believed that this direct judgement would detect change more sensitively than a difference score derived from post-project minus pre-project ratings. When the ratings were completed there were eighteen pre-project and eighteen change ratings for each parent and each child. An item by item analysis of this total of seventy-two scores for each parent-child set would have resulted in a surfeit of data. We chose, instead, to combine scores into five factors based upon the dimensions that had been developed for the Q-sort, and presented above. Each of the eighteen items -- ten Structured Situations and eight PCAT pictures -- were assigned to one or more of the five dimensions by a priori judgement. The dimensions to which each of the Structured Situations and pictures were assigned are presented in the Appendix.

2. Inter-rater reliability

Each rater scored ninety-one sets of protocols. In order to assure that they were, in fact, rating in the same manner, their ratings on a sub-set of eight items were correlated. Two items were chosen randomly from the parent pre-project ratings, two from the parent change ratings, and similarly from the children's ratings. The correlations had an N of seventy-three, since the eighteen sets of protocols that were used in the trial Q-sort were excluded because the raters had already discussed these protocols and might have reached an artificially high level of agreement on them.

The eight intercorrelations obtained from the above process ranged from .55 to .83, with an average of .70. The correlations from the parents' data tended to be higher than those from the children's data, but not significantly so. These inter-rater correlations indicate that the raters were within the acceptable range of reliability for measures of this kind. Therefore, all further statistical operations were based upon the combined scores of the raters, arrived at through simple summation.

3. Factor reliability

Each of the five factors represented a dimension of the parent-child relationship that was regarded as subject to change through the T-Group intervention. The Structured Situations and the PCAT pictures had been selected prior to the development of the factors and were meant to be a broad representation of the kinds of problems parents encountered in their relationships with their children. There was considerable agreement among the project staff and raters in assigning items to factors. Nevertheless, we tested the empirical cohesion of the factors by computing their alpha-coefficients.

The alpha-coefficients of the five factors for parent and child, pre-project and change ratings, are presented in TABLE VIII. In general, they are of a low to moderate order. Those derived from the pre-project interview data are, with two exceptions, higher than those derived from the change scores. The coefficients derived from the children's data are, as a rule, of a larger magnitude than those derived from the parents' data. The fifth factor, effectiveness in dealing with school authorities, does not seem to have any cohesion at all; in fact, three of the four coefficients have a negative sign.

All of the five items assigned to the fifth factor were school related, but embedded in a context that called for a response from the parent to some behavior on the part of the child. The low alpha-coefficients indicate that, for the parents and children alike, there was no consistency in responding to these stimuli. An examination of the actual responses suggests that the interviewees reacted to the context in which the school relationship was presented, rather than the school relationship itself. In one situation the child brings home a note from the teacher saying he had been noisy in school; in another the note was ambiguous. In one picture a parent figure is observing a fight between two boys outside the school building; in another the mother is receiving a report from the teacher, and appears to be in a good mood. The interviewees focused on the child and his behavior, rather than on the relationships with school authorities.

4. Relative performance of experimental and control groups

The major hypothesis predicted that:

(a) the leaders who participated in the T-Group in addition to receiving SHC leadership training would develop a more positive relationship with their children than did the leaders who received only SHC leadership training;

(b) the parents who participated in the SHCs conducted by the leaders who obtained T-Group training would develop a more positive relationship with their children than did the parents who participated in SHCs conducted by leaders who did not receive T-Group training.

A secondary hypothesis predicted that the leaders, as a group, irrespective of experimental (T-Group) or control (no T-Group) conditions, would develop a greater positive change in the relationship with their children than would the parents attending the SHCs.

To test these predictions, two-way analyses of variance, using an unweighted means solution, were computed on the change scores for each factor, and for the total eighteen item score. F ratios were obtained showing the level of significance of the differences between the T-Group leaders and parents and the control group leaders and parents; and between all leaders and all parents. F ratios were also obtained showing the significance of the differences between the interaction means. These F ratios, along with the means for each factor for pre-project and change scores, are presented in TABLE IX

TABLE VIII

FACTOR RELIABILITY

PARENT'S DATA	ALPHA COEFFICIENTS *	
	PRE	CHANGE
Factor I	.343	.338
Factor II	.269	.223
Factor III	.332	.138
Factor IV	.413	.197
Factor V	-.006	-.187
CHILD'S DATA		
Factor I	.618	.410
Factor II	.697	.270
Factor III	.252	.357
Factor IV	.478	.162
Factor V	-.106	.065

* The Alpha Coefficient was first presented by Cronbach. It measures the interval consistency of a factor by this formula:

$$r_{xx} = \frac{n}{n-1}\left(1 - \frac{\sum s_i^2}{s_t^2}\right)$$

where: n= number of items

s^2_i = squared standard deviation of items

s^2_t = squared standard deviation of total score

The technique for scoring change equalized the possibilities of obtaining positive the negative changes. With one exception, however, all groups changed in a positive direction.

There is an inverse correlation (-.44) between the parent - pre and parent - change scores; another, even higher, inverse correlation between the child - pre and child-change scores. These significant (at the .01 level) negative correlations indicate that those parents who were rated as having better parent-child relationships at the start of the study improved less along this dimension than those whose parent-child relationships were initially rated as being poorer. This regression to the mean holds true for the reports of both parents and children. The T-Group leaders present a striking exception to this phenomenon, and this fact will be discussed below.

For the rating scale employed, the possible range for the Total Scores (both pre-project and change scores) shown in TABLE IX is from 36 to 180, with a midpoint of 108. The first observation to be made is that the actual range is small. For the pre-project protocols, the ratings of the children's responses range from 84.97 to 95.81; the adults' responses from 106.00 to 116.56. The change ratings range, for the children from 110.25 to 117.55; for the adults, from 105.75 to 111.95. No great changes were detected by the measuring instruments that were used.

The ratings based upon the children's report of the parents'pre-project behavior are consistently lower than the ratings based upon the parents' report of their own behavior. On the face of it, one would conclude that, with respect to the pre-project behavior, the children report the parents as being less effective on the dimensions measured than the parents report themselves to be. However, another factor may be influencing these ratings. Many of the children interviewed at the start of the project were six years old or younger. Their responses were frequently meagre and difficult to rate. This may have depressed the ratings. It is interesting to note that the rank order of the pre-project Total Scores of the various groupings contained in TABLE IX is very similar for the children and the parents. (SEE TABLE X)

With respect to the change scores, the children's ratings are almost invariably higher than the parents'. Since the ratings based on the children's reports were lower to begin with, there was more room for change. Here, too, the nature of the children's protocols may be a factor. Part of the change noted in these ratings may be the result of fuller, easier to rate protocols that the same children, two to three years more mature, were able to give.

A total score change rating of 108 would represent no change; a higher rating a positive change; a lower rating a negative change. The change ratings for all of the children groups represent positive change. The change ratings

TABLE IX

MEANS AND F RATIOS OF INTERVIEW RATINGS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	T-GROUP		CONTROL		CHNG	LEADERS		PARENTS		CHNG	T-GROUP LEADERS	
CHILDREN	PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	F	PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	F	PRE	CHNG
FACTOR I	41.04	44.32	38.22	49.72	.879	41.75	48.06	38.85	49.98	1.651	42.63	47.
FACTOR II	29.67	38.18	28.04	37.34	.584	30.71	36.50	28.18	39.02	5.165	30.81	37.
FACTOR III	15.49	18.72	14.02	19.68	1.051	15.75	18.66	14.39	19.75	1.365	15.31	18.
FACTOR IV	36.93	42.96	34.26	44.40	1.565	37.50	44.03	34.90	43.32	.380	38.81	43.
FACTOR V	25.58	30.78	23.09	32.64	4.671	24.96	32.00	24.09	31.62	.164	25.69	31.
TOTAL SCORE	92.80	111.73	85.83	115.78	3.115	93.83	111.13	87.64	115.38	2.012	95.81	110.
PARENTS												
FACTOR I	48.24	50.06	46.48	49.27	.226	49.92	48.84	46.43	50.49	1.008	50.81	49.
FACTOR II	36.53	38.22	35.78	35.34	4.191	37.17	36.75	35.79	36.81	.002	36.69	39.
FACTOR III	17.56	18.06	16.89	17.91	.037	17.71	17.81	17.04	18.17	.206	17.06	18.
FACTOR IV	45.16	43.14	42.63	42.33	.342	47.50	42.22	42.58	43.25	.547	48.44	43.
FACTOR V	32.53	32.15	32.33	29.59	6.518	33.83	30.47	31.93	31.26	.630	33.94	32.
TOTAL SCORE	111.49	111.59	107.70	108.85	1.200	116.29	108.84	107.16	111.59	1.211	116.56	111.

For description of the factors see page 37

CHNG = Change Ratings
PRE = Ratings of pre project interviews

Single
Double

TABLE IX

MEANS AND F RATIOS OF INTERVIEW RATINGS

6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
LEADERS		PARENTS		CHNG	T-GROUP LEADERS		T-GROUP PARENTS		CONTROL LEADERS		CONTROL PARENTS		INTERACTIO CHANGE F
PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	F	PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	PRE	CHNG	
1.75	48.06	38.85	49.98	1.651	42.63	47.13	40.17	49.52	40.00	49.00	37.84	50.45	.101
0.71	36.50	28.18	39.02	5.165	30.81	37.75	29.03	38.62	30.50	35.25	27.53	39.42	2.219
5.75	18.66	14.39	19.75	1.365	15.31	18.69	15.59	18.76	16.63	18.63	13.47	20.74	1.192
7.50	44.03	34.90	43.32	.380	38.81	43.19	35.90	42.72	34.88	44.87	34.13	43.92	.050
4.96	32.00	24.09	31.62	.164	25.69	31.00	25.52	30.55	23.50	33.00	23.00	32.68	.006
3.83	113	87.64	115.38	2.012	95.81	110.25	91.14	113.21	89.88	114.00	84.97	117.55	.016
9.92	48.84	46.43	50.49	1.008	50.81	49.19	46.83	50.93	48.13	48.50	46.13	50.05	.006
7.17	36.75	35.79	36.81	.002	36.69	39.50	36.45	36.93	38.13	34.00	35.29	36.68	3.507
7.71	17.81	17.04	18.17	.206	17.06	18.37	17.83	17.76	19.00	17.25	16.45	18.58	1.531
7.50	42.22	42.58	43.25	.547	48.44	43.31	43.34	42.97	45.63	41.13	42.00	43.53	.980
3.83	30.47	31.93	31.26	.630	33.94	32.15	31.76	32.10	33.63	28.75	32.05	30.42	.762
6.29	108.84	107.16	111.59	1.211	116.56	111.94	108.69	111.24	115.75	105.75	106.00	111.95	1.899

= Change Ratings
Ratings of pre project interviews

Single underlining = Significant at 10% level
Double underlining = Significant at 5% level

TABLE X

Rank Order of Pre-Project Total Scores

RANKS

	Parent's Data	Children's Data
Control Parents	8	8
Control Leaders	3	5
Total Control	6	7
T-Group parents	5	4
T-Group Leaders	1	1
Total T-Group	4	3
Total parents	7	6
Total leaders	2	2

for all but one of the parent groups are in the direction of positive change.

The large inverse correlation (-.63) between the childrens' pre-project and change scores accounts for a great deal of the variance in these scores, and masks any other differences between the experimental and control groups. The overriding factor appears to be whether the parent was rated by the child as being more or less effective at the start of the project. The less effective the parent was rated at the start, the more improved she was rated at the end.

This inverse correlation between the pre-project and change ratings is less marked in the parents' data, accounting for less of the variance, and making additional observations possible. TABLE IX reveals that the experimental, or T-

Group, was rated higher (if insignificantly so) on all five factors on pre-project interviews with parents (columns 1 and 3). They were also rated higher on all change scores for all factors, with differences in change ratings for Factor II (effectiveness in responding to child's needs) and Factor V (effectiveness in dealing with school authorities) significant at the .05 level (columns 2 and 4). This is in support of the central hypothesis of this study.

Ratings based on parents' data contained in columns 6 and 8 reveal that leaders are rated consistently higher than parents (irrespective of experimental or control group membership). This undoubtedly reflects the selection process in the recruitment of leaders. Change ratings for these two groups (columns 7 and 9) are roughly equivalent, with none of the differences statistically significant.

Columns 11 through 19 present the scores for leaders and for parents by experimental condition, and the F-ratio for each factor. Again checking the parents' data, only Factor II (effectiveness in responding to child's needs) approaches significance (statistically significant at the .10 level). However, there is a general trend observable that is noteworthy.

On the pre-project ratings, T-Group leaders and control leaders are rated equally high, with the T-Group parents and control parents lower in that order. For the change ratings, the inverse correlation between the pre-project and change ratings makes itself felt for all groups except the T-Group leaders. With respect to the Total Score, the control parents start lowest and change the most in a positive direction. The T-Group parents start next lowest and change somewhat less, still in a positive direction. The control leaders, who were almost as high as the T-Group leaders at the start, move in a negative direction. Only the T-Group leaders have resisted the draw of the inverse relationship between pre-project and change scores. They were highest at the start, and their change score is just about as high as the change score of the control parents, who were lowest to begin with.

A difference significant at the .05 level was previously noted between experimental and control groups of Factors II and V (columns 5,parents data). It would appear that most of this difference was contributed by the T-Group leaders changing positively and the control group leaders changing negatively.

The data support these conclusions.

The hypothesis that the leaders who received SHC leadership training and also participated in the T-Group would develop a more positive relationship with their children than did the leaders who received only SHC leadership training, is supported.

The hypothesis that the parents who participated in the SHCs conducted by leaders who obtained T-Group training would develop a more positive relationship with their children than did the parents who participated in the SHCs conducted by leaders who did not receive T-Group training, is not supported.

The hypothesis that the leaders, irrespective of experimental (T-Group) or control (no T-Group) conditions would show a greater positive change in the relationship with their children than did the parents attending the SHCs, is not supported.

In sum, participation by leaders in the T-Group resulted in an improvement in their relationship with their children, particularly in the effectiveness with which they responded to the children's needs. This improvement was not carried over to the parents who participated in the SHCs conducted by these leaders.

Note: This study was not an evaluation of the effectiveness of the SHCs, but rather an evaluation of the effectiveness of the T-Group in improving Parent-child relationships, when added to the SHC program. We have not studied, and therefore can make no report about, any differences between the experimental and control groups with respect to achieving any of the other objectives of the SHC program.

Leaders' Evaluation of the Program

As the active phase of the program was ending, we scheduled separate meetings for the Manhattan and Queens leaders (logistics precluded one meeting for all leaders) to obtain their evaluation of the program. Attendance at these meetings was excellent.

They were asked how the SHC program had affected them; what was helpful and what was not; how useful was the T-Group; and how they would change the program if they could. In general, their reactions to the program was extremely positive. They liked the SHC program, felt they had benefited a great deal from it, and hoped that a way could be found for the program to continue. What follows are largely quotes from what the parents said at these meetings.

They endorsed the usefulness of discussing problems with other parents.

"It's easier talking with other parents whose children have problems, than with teachers and other professionals."

"In the SHC we found we have the same things with our children as they (other parents) have with their children."

"It's good to share problems with other parents. It makes things easier to think that it's not just your child it's happening to."

Parents from all schools stated that they felt they had learned about dealing with their children from the program

"Parents bring problems about their children to the Clinics and it's helped other parents with their children."

"We think about what we have discussed at the Clinics and clusters instead of slapping the children."

The Queens group felt they had learned about themselves, and compared the two aspects of the program.

"We learned a lot from Juliette (the field worker) on how to deal with the school administration and how to act as a parent. From Barbara (the T-Group leader) we learned how to deal withourselves and how to understand ourselves and other people. She would bring everything out into the open. She helped identify problems and always asked 'Why'? We had to try to solve the problems. She didn't do it for us. We had to think and talk about it even if we didn't want to."

The Manhattan leaders also reported changes in themselves which helped them in their work with other parents.

"We learned about ourselves and other parents."

"We learned to give more of ourselves, not pull ourselves away from other parents."

"None of the parents were vocal in the beginning, but now we all are."

The leaders reported that the SHC program sparked the establishment or revival of other parent-related school programs.

"We had a lot of previous difficulty in getting parents to attend the Parents Association meetings. Now we're getting more parents out."

"It gets the parents out of the house and talking over problems. It gives the parents a good combination with the Follow Through program" (a school program for Head Start "graduates").

"We used to be very disenchanted with the Parents Association, but we got information and more confidence from the SHC and things started changing."

"Class parents and a functioning Parents Association came out of the SHC. We hadn't had that for years."

"Eight of the SHC regulars will hold office in the Parents Association next year."

The leaders felt they had learned a great deal about the workings of the schools and how to deal with the faculty and the administration.

"It helped me learn a lot I didn't know, especially about what was going on in the schools."

"We have more confidence in talking to the school administration. We got more respect from the teachers and the administration. We also got more knowledge and changed the environment of the school by being able to talk to the teachers and the administration."

"Since we started asking questions of the school we began to get more respect and more help from the teachers."

"At the leadership meetings we found out what is going on in the schools and we also learned to develop an objective point of view and find out what is happening between the children and teachers and parents."

"It (SHC) gives the parents a way to get both sides of the story when the child complains. It gives the parents a chance to talk over things before blowing up at the teacher or the administration. It gets teachers together with the parents so that the parents can explain how our children feel. Often the teachers don't know and the parents have to explain."

Technical help from the field worker was greatly appreciated.

"It's great to have someone to call in a crisis and be able to get explanations and information."

Increased information and increased self - confidence led the parents to insist upon being consulted with regard to certain school activities. Major emphasis was placed upon their new - found adequacy in relating to and, if necessary, confronting the administration.

"At the beginning we had big problems with the principal, but after we met with her and after she saw all the new parents coming out, she began to like the program."

"We've been able to ask questions and demand changes. The administration started being defensive when we started talking up."

"There are many classroom problems and we have learned to bring parents, teachers, administrators together to discuss them openly."

"We had a bad space problem and didn't have our own place to meet. We were not strong enough to stand up to the administration. They used the space problem on purpose to hurt the Clinics and not let us spread out more. When the leaders began to stand up to the administration they began

to make arrangements for us."

At the Queens meeting the leaders gave a great deal of thought to the evaluation of the T-Group.

"It helped us know more about ourselves."

"It all would have fallen apart without Barbara and her insistence on continuing the T-Group. We could not have had the two schools really getting together without it. Out of the T-Group came an affection and understanding of each other."

"It was important for learning unity, how to make decisions, and to stick to them as a group. It used to be impossible for us not to change a decision if someone else came in with a new idea after the decision was made."

"It was great Barbara took a lot of crap, and she helped us a lot just being there."

Leaders from both schools in Queens agreed that it was more helpful to have had joint T-Group sessions.

"We have to learn to get along and it was good to start doing it with mothers from different schools."

They discussed the differences between the two T-Group leaders who had worked with their group.

"Barbara (second leader) tried to pull us together as a group. Lucia (first leader) dealt with problems we would be confronting as leaders. Lucia used many exercises. Barbara tried to go into our personal lives. She set up a rapport with the group and tried to see what was missing so that we could work problems out together. Both made us put what we think about ourselves out on the table so that everybody could see and talk about it."

"At first we were afraid of Barbara picking our brains, but after we told her how we felt, we got more together."

"Barbara made us see the meaning of behavior. 'Why?' is her favorite word."

Both evaluation meetings discussed ways to improve the program. The parents from P.S. 68 and 133 in Manhattan, part of the control group, focused on an activity program.

"We need sewing classes and parent workshops. Arts and crafts were very successful in attracting parents, but we needed somebody to welcome parents whenever they came into the school; somebody to be there, available every day."

"We should have more activity workshops like sewing, knitting and special activity programs of interest to parents."

"Lots of problems getting parents out to the SHC. We offered to pick them up and to take care of their younger children, but we were often flatly refused even by mothers who had clear problems."

"We had difficulty because of the name "Clinic". People were turned off and at first we didn't know why. Many were afraid of coming into a school building. They had so many bad memories of schools that they just wouldn't come in."

Toward the end of both meetings, the parents talked about their disappointment because the program was ending. Although they were all informed about the duration of the program when it first began, they still felt let down.

"Everytime a program starts doing some good it gets withdrawn."

"In the beginning of the program we were told that it would only run until this June, but we had our doubts. We felt that the program would go on indefinitely once we started it and the Psychological Service Center saw that it was benefitting us. We felt that it would just continue. When we were reminded that your part was ending in June, our egos fell and we had doubts about our being able to continue it in September. We didn't know where we were going from here."

The evaluation meetings concluded with the parents talking about their plans for the coming year. All expressed the desire to maintain the SHC program in the school, even without grant funds from the Psychological Service Center. As one parent put it, "You need parents in the schools to help other parents become involved."

The leaders from all the schools agreed that the SHC should not be controlled by the school system because "The Board of Education co-opts the parents it hires and prevents them from being effective." The Manhattan group thought that perhaps the Board of Education could give the funds to the Parents Association, who would then hire the parents. The Queens group felt this would not work; that there is no way to conduct an independent program paid for with school funds.

The leaders asked whether their relationship with the Psychological Service Center could continue in the fall, if the Clinics were resumed. They requested technical help in the preparation of materials, consultation about special problems, and the use of office equipment if this was not available in the schools. We agreed, in writing, to those requests.

Each school had its own plan for continuing the program. These plans were often inconsistent with their desire not to be "co-opted" by the school administration. The leaders in PS 133, who were now working in the school as Family Aides, felt they could conduct the Clinics by taking a few hours a week from their interviewing schedule. The leaders from P.S. 68 had met with their District Superintendent to request district funds for the program. He had not yet replied at the time of our meeting, but they felt sure he would deny the request since he used most of the time of their meeting to complain about his budget. They were considering Parents Association sponsorship, financed by cake sales and other fund raising ventures. P.S. 197 leaders were planning to meet with Title I coordinator to explore the possibility of obtaining funds. They felt they could not manage with only Parents Association sponsorship. C.S. 30 planned to use Parents Association meetings, special entertainments and sales to raise money to continue the program. The leaders from P.S. 76 had already talked to their principal and believed they had a promise from him to make school funds available for the program. It is interesting to note that the leaders from all five schools in Manhattan wished to keep the program going, but felt they had to be paid for their participation.

The leaders from the Queens schools reacted differently. They planned to continue their Clinics on a weekly basis, and the T-Group on a monthly basis, with the volunteer assistance of the field worker and the T-Group leader. The leaders from P.S. 50, who were employed in the school, as well as those from P.S. 45, who were not so employed, understood they would receive no remuneration for continuing to serve as leaders. They planned fund raising activities through the Parents Association to provide for refreshments at the meetings.

Despite the good intentions in June, the SHCs did not resume as a program in its own right in any of the schools in September. Even in Queens, where the field worker and the T-Group leader had volunteered their services on a limited basis, the program was not reactivated.

The fatal flaw seemed to be the absence of regular direction and compensation. Other programs came along which offered these features to the parents. The parents were attracted to these new programs, just as the programs were attracted to the parents because of the skills and abilities they had developed as a result of their participation in the SHC program.

SUMMARY

1. MH 15053 -- Modifying Parent-Child Behavior in a Low Income Group

2. Objectives

The United Parents Association (UPA) developed Self Help Clinics in schools in low income areas in New York City. These Clinics consisted of groups of parents meeting regularly to discuss problems centering around their children and the schools. In the course of these discussions, questions of parent-child relationships were frequently raised.

The UPA reported that the parents sought to develop self - motivation and self-direction in their children, but their primary reliance on punishment and constraint as a means of influencing their children defeated this objective by making the children more responsive to outer control and outer direction. This observation is consistent with the reports in the literature that working-class parents are more controlling and authoritarian in their relationships with their children than are middle-class parents.

The objective was to intervene in the SHCs in a manner that would modify the authoritarian relationship between parent and child, in order to promote more self-reliance, self-motifation and self-control in the children.

The Psychological Service Center was asked by the UPA to design and carry out the intervention. Two procedures were proposed: 1) a T-Group for SHC leaders at which problems in parent-child relationships would be dealt with; 2) training SHC leaders as mental health aides at Patterson House, a residential treatment center for disturbed, delinquent, adolescent boys. The issues to be studied were: 1) what effect would each of these interventions have on the relationship between the leaders and their children? 2) would this effect, if any, be extended to the parents participating in the SHCs conducted by these leaders?

During the Course of the project Patterson House discontinued functioning. It was therefore impossible to provide the leaders with training as mental health aides. Since the training that had been provided by Patterson House before it discontinued was minimal, the participants who had been assigned to this experimental condition were included in the control group.

3. Action

Fifty-four parents from seven schools were trained as leaders for the SHCs. Three of these schools were assigned to the control group, the other four to the experimental group.

All leaders received training in recruitment of parents for the SHCs and in conducting the SHCs. They were provided with content material for Clinic discussions, including school curriculum, relationships with school authorities, and school and community issues that bore upon the educational process. In addition, the leaders in the experimental group participated in a T-Group which dealt with problems of parent - child relationships. The T-Group activities included discussion and analysis of personal problems, role playing, and programmed exercises involving issues of interpersonal relationships.

The SHCs met weekly, and were attended by 961 parents, averaging about 14 per session. There were two T-Groups for the experimental group, a pair of schools participating in each. One group met for fifty - four sessions, the other for thirty-six.

4. Conclusions

Participation by leaders in the T-Group resulted in an improvement in their relationships with their children, primarily in the effectiveness with which they responded to the children's needs. There was also an increase in the effectiveness with which the leaders who participated in the T-Group dealt with school authorities. No comparable improvement was observed for the leaders who did not participate in the T-Group.

The improvement in parent-child relationships observed for the leaders who participated in the T-Group did not extend to the parents who participated in the SHCs conducted by these leaders. No differences in changes in parent-child relationships were observed between parents attending SHCs in the control (no T-Group) and experimental (T-Group) groups.

5. Evaluation procedures

Differences between experimental and control groups were assessed through pre- and post-project interviews in which the interviewees responded to a set of Structured Situations and to a specially designed version of the Parent-Child Apperception Test. Ninety-one parent-child pairs were interviewed, including all the leaders and a child of each, and a sample of parents who participated in the SHCs, and a child of each of these parents. The parent and child were interviewed separately. Parents were asked how they would deal with each of ten Structured Situations depicting common parent-child interactions. The children were asked how their parents would deal with the same situations. The Parent-Child Apperception Test consisted of eight pictures depicting scenes of parent-child relationships, which were presented in the same manner as the standard Thematic Apperception Test. The responses given in the interviews were scored blindly by two raters along an effective parent-ineffective parent continuum. Analyses of variance were computed to determine the significance of the differences of the T-Group effect, the leadership effect, and of the leadership status by experimental condition interaction effect.

Additional interviews were conducted with sixty-eight participants, including all leaders, to determine what pre- and post-project changes had occurred in their educational, vocational, school and community activities.

Subjective evaluations and criticisms of the project were obtained during group meetings of the leaders, conducted at the termination of the project.

Reports were filed by the T-Group leaders evaluating the changes they observed in the T-Group participants.

6. Project information dissemination

At a symposium at the American Psychological Association convention on August 31, 1969, Dr. Milton Theaman presented a paper on "Research Problems in the Community Service Center" which discussed experiences in conducting this project.

The project was prominently cited in the following presentations:

Leonard Small and Milton Theaman: A Free-Standing Psychological Service Center, Professional Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp 20-24

Leonard Small and Milton Theaman: The Current Status of Psychological Service Centers, Professional Psychology, Winter, 1971, pp 65-69

A paper presented by Dr. Milton Theaman on May 9, 1970 at the annual meeting of the New York State Psychological Association, entitled The Clinical Psychologist as Social Change Agent.

Reports on the project have been included in the Annual Reports of the Psychological Service Center. These Annual Reports have a distribution of approximately 250, primarily to psychologists.

7. Use of project results

Several special school programs conducted under the auspices of community school boards have incorporated segments of the SHC program, particularly in the training of paraprofessionals.

The United Parents Association, co-sponsor of the project, will be using the results of the project in planning future SHC projects.

8. Potential users of project results

The information produced by this project can be used by any agency -- educational, social, mental health -- in dealing with parents about the issues of parent-child relationships.

9. Future publications

Publications in professional journals are planned, but are not now in press.

10. Problems encountered

The problems of developing a project in a community, as opposed to imposing one upon a community, under the present system of proposal review were discussed in a paper by Milton Theaman entitled Research Problems in the Community Service Center . A copy was previously submitted and another is included in the Appendix.

Funding agencies look with favor upon interagency collaboration in the conduct of research projects. Such collaboration broadens the reach of the project, indicates a widespread interest and need, divides responsibility, brings more expertise to bear upon the study and, in general, amasses more resources for the conduct of the research. However, it also multiplies the administrative problems, increases the threats to the conduct of the project through altered agency priorities, unpredictable disruptive interventions, and agency defection or demise.

This project had to be rescued from the near fatal effects of altered agency priorities (UPA) and agency demise (Patterson House).

At the time this project was conducted, the resistance in low-income communities to intervention by "outsiders" was high. In acknowledgement of the feelings of the community, a field worker from the community was engaged as a liaison between the project staff and the participants. Added to the project design, this resulted in too many intermediaries. The flow was from project staff to field worker to SHC leaders to parents attending SHCs to children. This resulted in what may be called a "bleaching effect." Passing from link to link, the effects of the intervention are diluted until they are pallid and barely detectable.

If this study should be replicated there should be more direct intervention at the level where results are sought.

11. NIMH role

Our experience with NIMH personnel was entirely satisfactory. They were available when necessary, cooperative when called upon, and tolerant of our autonomy and our shortcomings.

12. This summary was prepared by Milton Theaman, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, with the assistance of Walter Gadlin, Ph. D., Research Director.